



The following aims to set out Shropshire Council's position in response to the Government's expectation that schools should start to invite a wider cohort of children into school from 1 June. The statement focuses on primary schools, whilst we await guidance from the Government on their expectations with regard to secondary schools. The approach recognises different layers of responsibility and accountability including: Government direction, local authority, MATs and individual schools.

We are grateful to all schools during these unprecedented times for the support that they have provided to their pupils, students and parents. It is important to note that the majority of schools in Shropshire have remained open during the lockdown period, and we believe that there is positive experience that we can build on.

Shropshire Council wants to see the wider re-opening of schools in line with the Government's aspiration where it is practical and safe for schools to do so based on national guidelines. The safety of children and school staff is our key priority.

We are committed to working collaboratively with schools and unions to agree the way forward for Shropshire schools.

Before schools open up to wider cohorts, each school will undertake a risk assessment which will determine whether wider re-opening can be achieved and if a phased re-integration is necessary. We do not expect schools to open more widely until the risk assessment has been completed and agreed. Shropshire Council recognises that for many schools a phased re-integration will be appropriate. We will support schools' judgement in this matter.

Shropshire Council recognises constraints such as staffing and buildings place limitations on some of our schools. Some classrooms may not allow for the class size of 15 as suggested by the Government. This may impact on the number of children who are initially able to access education and the days available to different year groups or pupils.

We expect therefore that schools will have different levels and patterns of attendance to meet their local context.

Schools should review their plans each week to consider if it is safe to invite more children into school.

Schools should pay due regard to the prioritisation of year groups identified in the Government guidelines, including retaining a focus on encouraging vulnerable pupils to return to school.

Shropshire Council is facilitating the distribution of emergency packs of PPE to all schools and academies which will meet the current national requirements for the re-opening of schools.

We will ensure that our Public Health team will provide advice on an ongoing basis to schools.

We recognise that attending school during this period is a parental choice.

21 May 2020